

Message Text

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44

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 IO-14 ISO-00 NSA-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 OMB-01 EB-11 SY-10 SCA-01 EUR-25

DRC-01 /165 W

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R 261120Z DEC 73

FM USINT CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4826

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 4193

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR EG LY

SUBJECT: COMMENTS OF SAUDI DIPLOMAT ON EGYPTIAN/LIBYAN
RELATIONS, QADHAAFI'S HEALTH, AND ORIGIN OF
ROME TERRORIST ATTACK

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH USINTOFF DECEMBER 24, SAUDI EMBASSY
OFFICER MOHAMMAD FAKKI REFERRED TO CURRENT STATE OF
EGYPTIAN/LIBYAN RELATIONS. HE DESCRIBED THESE AS IMPROVING
SOMEWHAT DESPITE RECENT NEAR BREAK IN RELATIONSHIP AND
FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SADAT AND QADHAAFI ON SETTLE-
MENT OF ME CONFLICT. FAKKI SAID THAT LIBYAN PRIMIN JALLUD'S
MID-DECEMBER VISITS TO CAIRO HAD SUCCESSFULLY PAPERED OVER
MAJOR PROBLEMS IN EGYPTIAN/LIBYAN RELATIONSHIP, MOST OF
WHICH HAD BEEN CAUSED BY QADHAAFI WITHOUT DESIGN OR SUPPORT
OF RCC. IN ANY CASE, SADAT APPEARED TO WANT A RELATIVELY
NORMAL RELATIONSHIP WITH LIBYA, AND TO ATTAIN THIS END HE
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WAS WILLING TO TOLERATE QADHAAFI'S BEHAVIOR AS LONG AS IT DID

NOT COME INTO DIRECT AND DESTRUCTIVE CONFLICT WITH EGYPTIAN POLICIES. FAKKI SAID THAT HE EXPECTED REOPENING OF LIBYAN RELATIONS OFFICE IN CAIRO VERY SHORTLY. (COMMENT: THIS HAS NOT OCCURRED AS OF DECEMBER 26.)

2. WITHIN CONTEXT OF QADHAAFI'S "TOLERABLE" BEHAVIOR, FAKKI STATED THAT SADAT APPEARED UNWILLING TO PUBLICLY CRITICIZE LIBYAN LEADER FOR HIS ROLE IN BACKING ROME TERRORIST ATTACK, HOWEVER DISTURBED HE WAS AT THE EVENT. FAKKI REITERATED THAT THERE WAS NO DOUBT IN SAG'S MIND THAT QADHAAFI WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR ATTACK, ALTHOUGH HE DECLINED TO GIVE PRECISE DETAILS ON SUBJECT.

3. FAKKI ADDED THAT QADHAAFI'S HEALTH WAS NOT GOOD, AND THAT ACCORDING TO ASHRAF MARWAN, QADHAAFI HAD A SERIOUS CASE OF THROAT CANCER. THIS MIGHT LEAD TO MORE ERRATIC BEHAVIOR BY LIBYAN LEADER, AND TO SUCCESSION PROBLEM WITHIN RCC; BUT HE BELIEVED THAT LATTER WOULD BE RESOLVED BY APPOINTMENT OF JALLUD TO QADHAAFI'S PLACE, SHOULD THIS BECOME NECESSARY.
SMITH

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